

TRICKS & TIPS



- Advanced guides, tips and tutorials for your WhatsApp account and more

OVER
435
SECRETS &
HACKS

- We share our awesome tips for keeping WhatsApp safe and secure

- Next level secrets and fixes get to the heart of the best WhatsApp features

WhatsApp



**Everything you need to take
your WhatsApp experience
to the next level**

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WhatsApp

WhatsApp Tricks & Tips is the perfect digital publication for the user that wants to take their skill set to the next level. Do you want to enhance your user experience? Or wish to gain insider knowledge? Do you want to learn directly from experts in their field? Learn the numerous short cuts that the professionals use? Over the pages of the new advanced user guide you will learn everything you will need to know to become a more confident, better skilled and experienced owner. A user that will make the absolute most of their use and ultimately WhatsApp itself. An achievement you can earn by simply enabling us to exclusively help and teach you the abilities we have gained over our decades of experience.

*Over the page
our journey continues,
and we will be with you
at every stage to advise,
inform and ultimately
inspire you to
go further.*



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“...if you want to get to grips with this great app read on and we will show you how to master it and discover more than you ever imagined...”





Useful Accessories

WhatsApp has a wealth of companion apps that greatly enhance your messaging experience. They might add fun features for you to enjoy, or boost your privacy protection or security.

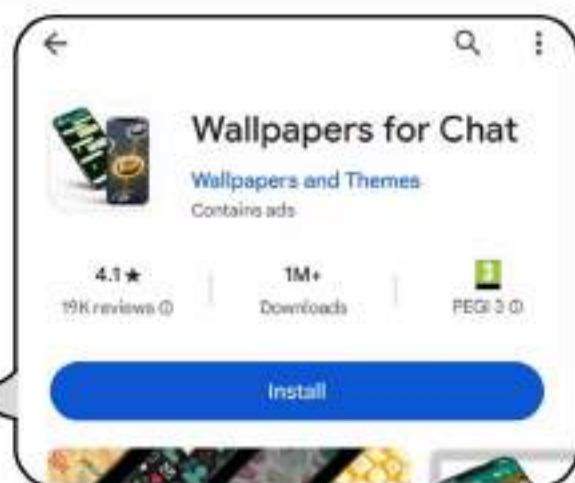
There are all sorts of third-party apps for WhatsApp, for all sorts of tasks. They can tweak your messages, send videos, change the default wallpapers and even add some extra content to WhatsApp. They're available for iOS, Android and even Windows phones.

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WhatsApp Wallpaper

WhatsApp comes with a selection of wallpapers but they're not the greatest looking backgrounds, being made up mainly of block or blending colours. To spice up your WhatsApp chat backdrop, here's an app that offers 75 wallpapers in glorious HD.



1 There are countless WhatsApp wallpaper apps available for Android but of the many that clutter the Play Store, Wallpapers for Chat is a good starting place. Open up the Play Store and search for the app, then tap the Install button and Open the app.

2 With the Wallpapers for Chat app open, tap which category you want to view (along the top of the screen). Select the wallpaper and tap the image to download it. Open WhatsApp and enter a Chat session, tap the three Vertical dots and choose Wallpaper from the menu. Tap Gallery and the downloaded wallpaper appears. Tap Set when done.



ALTERNATIVE WALLPAPER

If you prefer not to download a third-party wallpaper app, go to the main WhatsApp screen, tap the three vertical dots and choose Settings from the menu. Select Chats, then Wallpaper. In the Wallpaper screen select Wallpaper Library and tap OK to download the WhatsApp Wallpaper package. This is an official wallpaper app, so just tap install and follow the on-screen instructions.



Nature HD Wallpaper for iPhone



iPhone users certainly aren't left out in the cold when it comes to incredible HD wallpapers for WhatsApp. Again, as with the Google Play Store, Apple's App Store has plenty of apps available and one of the better choices is Nature HD Wallpaper for WhatsApp.



1 Open the App Store app on your iPhone and search for Nature HD Wallpaper for WhatsApp. Tap Get to start the installation or tap the app's title for more information. Once the app has successfully installed, tap the Open button to launch it.



2 Scroll through the available wallpaper and tap to open the images. When the image opens, tap the Download button at the bottom. Open WhatsApp, tap Settings followed by Chats, then Chat Wallpaper. Tap Photos and the downloaded images are available within WhatsApp.

iPHONE WALLPAPER

iPhone users have more choice when it comes to default WhatsApp wallpaper. Open the Chat Wallpaper screen again (Settings > Chats > Chat Wallpaper) and choose Wallpaper Library. Rather than requiring an extra app to download and install, the iPhone has an excellent selection of interesting backgrounds you can use in WhatsApp built-in. Simply select the image and tap it to set up the new backdrop.





Emoticons and Emoji Stickers for WhatsApp

WhatsApp already contains dozens of built-in Emoji and Emoticons but that hasn't stopped developers from designing their own unique spin on the Emoji phenomenon. Scroll through the app stores and you can see plenty on offer; here are some of our favourites.



Sticker Maker for WhatsApp

Sticker Maker Studio

Contains ads • In-app purchases

4.5 ★

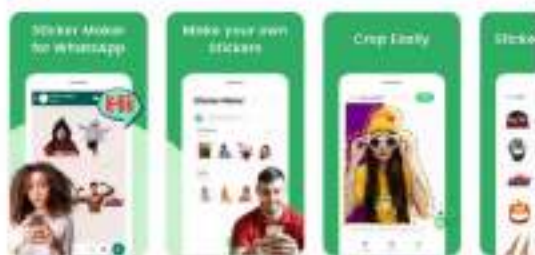
243K reviews

10M+

Downloads

PEGI 3

Install



About this app



WhatSmiley: Emoji WASTicker

StA - Smileys, Stickers, animated GIF & Emoji apps

Contains ads • In-app purchases

4.6 ★

193K reviews

10M+

Downloads

PEGI 12

Install



About this app



Sticker Maker for WhatsApp - This app contains loads of stickers, Emoji and Emoticons alongside the ability to create your own Emoji. There's bundles of unique fonts, styles and even accessories you can include within your chats. It's free and available from Google Play.

WhatSmiley - This Android based app adds heaps of new and brilliantly designed Emoji and Emoticons to WhatsApp and other social media platforms. It's easy to use and the styles are presented in clear HD



Emojis For SMS & Social Messaging Apps -

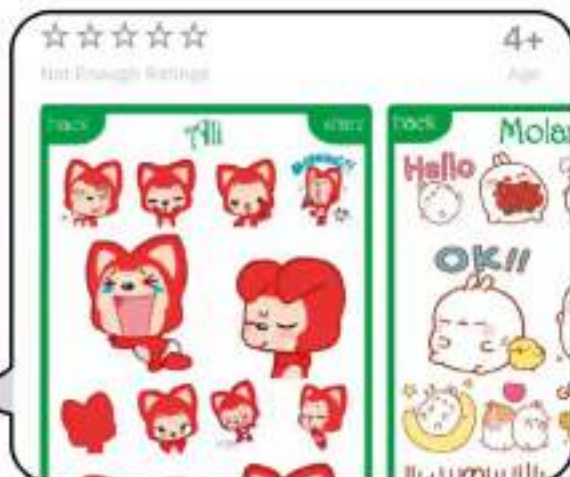
Windows Phone users can get a huge 3,000-plus pack of Emoji and Emoticon Stickers via the Windows Store tile. This app features high quality stickers from simple smileys to famous people, TV and movies; plus it's free to download and use.



Emoji Stickers HD - Available from the Windows 10 Store and for desktop only, Emoji Stickers HD comes with over 4,000 unique smileys, Emoji and Stickers for you to include in WhatsApp as well as other social media platforms.



Messages Wishes - With hundreds of free messages and stickers, this Android app covers most celebrations and occasions. Birthdays, graduations, Valentine's Day, Christmas, thank you, sorry and sympathy, parent's days and much more. Just tap the message or sticker and share it with your WhatsApp contacts.



Movemojis GIFs Stickers - Developed for iPhone, Movemojis GIFs Stickers features an abundance of animated Stickers for WhatsApp and other messenger apps. Simply install, pick the animated GIF you want to use and share it to your WhatsApp chat message.





Advanced Hacks, Tips & Tricks for WhatsApp

By now, you're familiar with WhatsApp app on your chosen platform. It's now time to take things further, with some advanced tips and tutorials.

In this section, we teach you how to pin chats to the top of your chat list, delete or mute chats, block contacts with whom you no longer wish to interact on WhatsApp, report spam or abusive messages, create group chats and much, much more.

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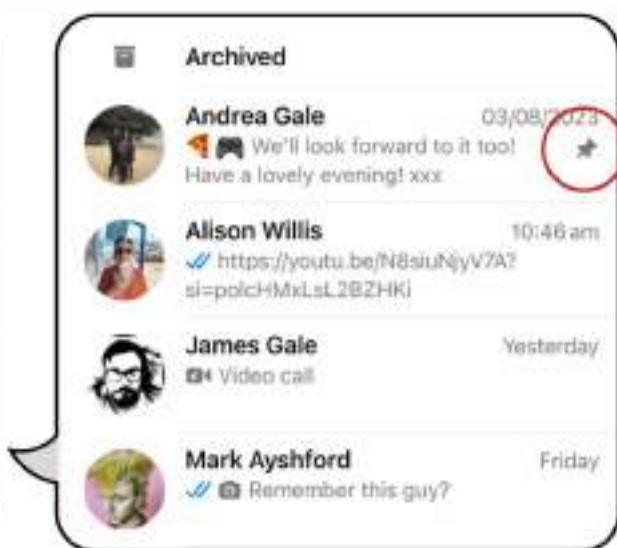
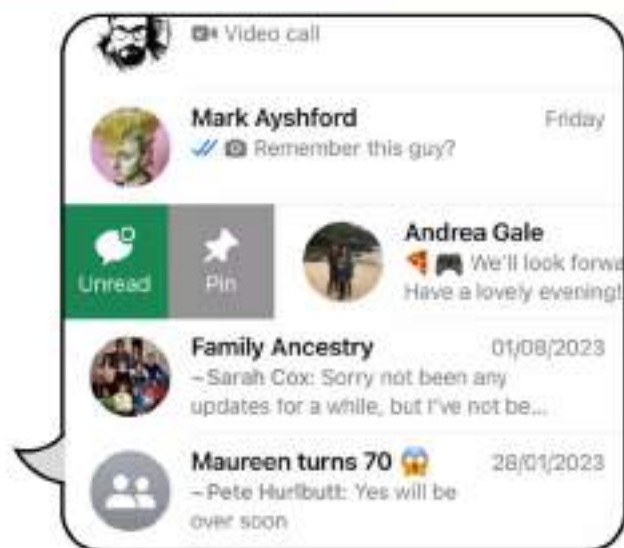
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Pin Chats



An interesting feature of WhatsApp is the ability to pin chats to your device's Home screen. You're able to pin up to the three specific chats, and remove them too. The process is extremely easy and helps you keep on top of chats without needing to continually enter WhatsApp itself.



1 It's easy to pin a chat to the top of your chat window. First of all, find the chat you want to pin and swipe it to the right, revealing two new icons; Unread, which marks the chat as unread, and Pin. Tap the Pin icon.

2 The chat in question is moved to the top of the chats list. On the right-hand side of this chat, you see a pin icon. This shows it is pinned, and will always appear at the top of the list and is not displaced by incoming messages on other chats.

REMOVING THE PINS

Removing a pinned chat is simply a reversal of the pinning a chat process. Swipe the pinned chat to the right again, and you once more see two icons. The 'Pin' icon now reads 'Unpin'. Tap it to unpin the chat, allowing it to sink down the list as new messages arrive for other chats.





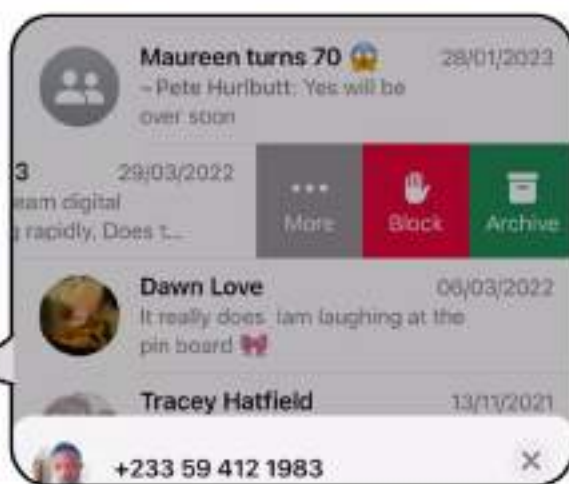
Delete Chats



The set of icons that appear along the top of the screen when you long press a chat offer quite a degree of control over your chats. In this instance, we look at deleting a chat; remember, once a chat has been deleted, you can't get it back unless you have a backup.



1 There are two ways of deleting a chat in WhatsApp. In the chat list, you can tap and hold the chat until a window pops up. One of the options in this list is Delete Chat. Tap it to delete the chat in question.



2 Alternatively, in the chat list, swipe the chat you wish to delete to the left. You see new icons. Tap the three-dots icon, the one labelled 'More', to bring up an options window. The bottom option is Delete Chat.

RESTORING YOUR CHAT HISTORY

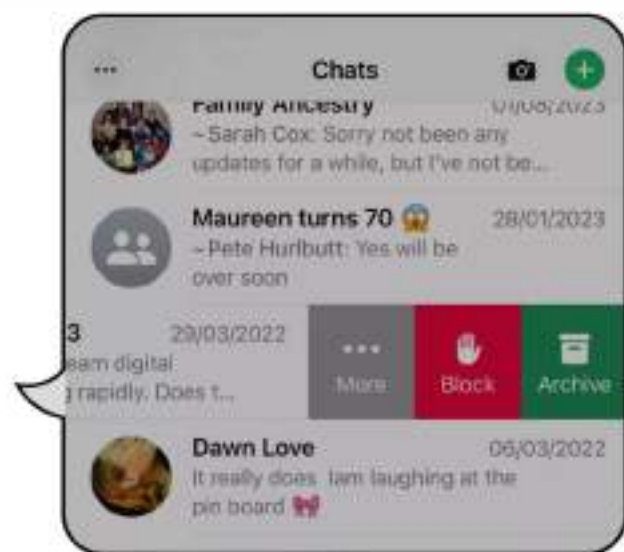


WhatsApp doesn't store any of its users' chat histories on the company servers, so as a company, it is unable to retrieve any deleted messages. However, you can use Google Drive or iCloud to back up your chat history and ultimately restore it should anything go wrong. To make a backup, go to Settings > Chats > Chat Backup, and follow the on-screen instructions.



Mute Chats

While it's great to have countless contacts sending you messages in WhatsApp every few minutes, there comes a time when you may want to silence the notifications. Naturally you could turn the notification volume down on your device but that may hinder other important messages.



1 You can mute a single chat without muting your entire device's notification settings. Long-tap the chat and select Mute from the menu, or swipe it left, tap More and tap the Mute link in the pop-up window.



2 You are now presented with an option menu. You can mute notifications from that chat for eight hours, a week or permanently. Choose an option, and you get no more notifications from that chat for that time.



UN-MUTE CHATS

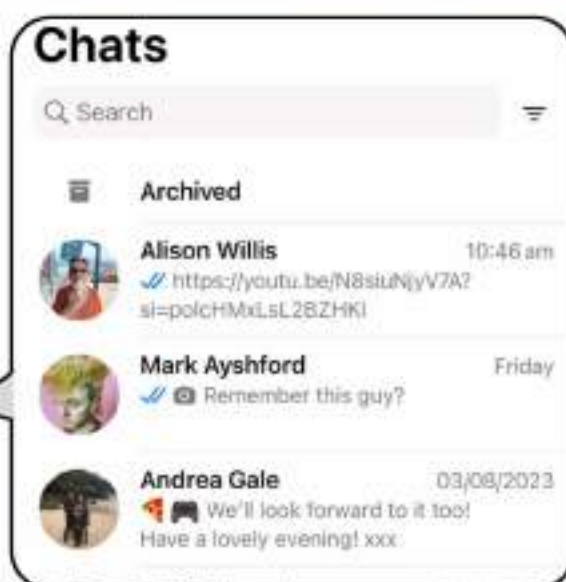
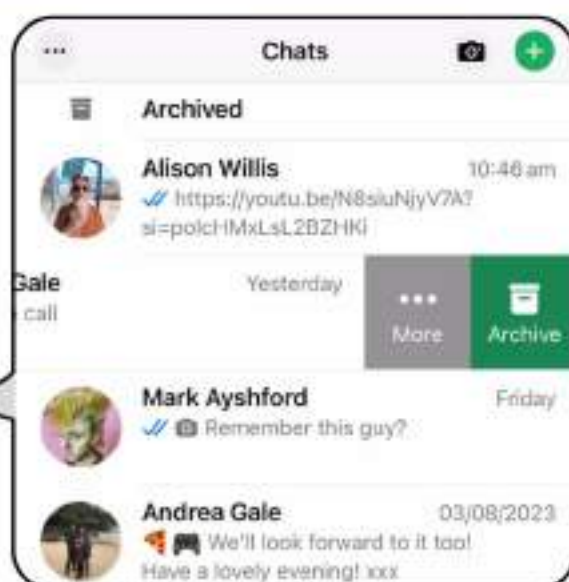
If you want to bring the conversation back alive again before the set time period has elapsed, simply reverse the process. Notice that the muted chat contact has the mute icon in their chat bar, just under the date. Tap and long press to bring the menu up and tap the speaker icon (this time without a line through it) to unmute the chat.



Archive Chats



Archiving chats is different to that of backing up a chat. The Archive Chat feature allows you to hide a conversation from your main Chats screen but gives you the option to access it later. It's a good way of organising your chats and any groups you're a part of.



1 Again, there's two ways of doing this. Either tap and hold the chat you wish to archive until a menu pops up, or swipe the chat left to reveal two icons, one of which is Archive.

2 Tap the Archive link in the menu or the Archive icon revealed by swiping the chat left. The chat then disappears from your chat list, and is no longer visible on that page.

UN-ARCHIVE CHATS

If you want to bring your archived chats back into the main Chat screen, tap on the 'Archived chats' link at the top of the chat list. From within the archived section, select the chat you want to restore, and long tap for the menu or swipe left for the icons. Tap the Unarchive option or icon and the chat is restored.

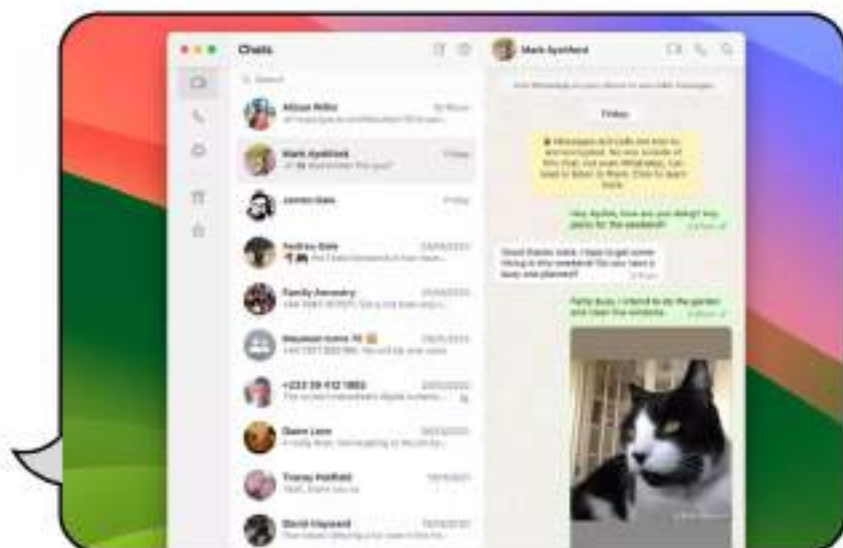




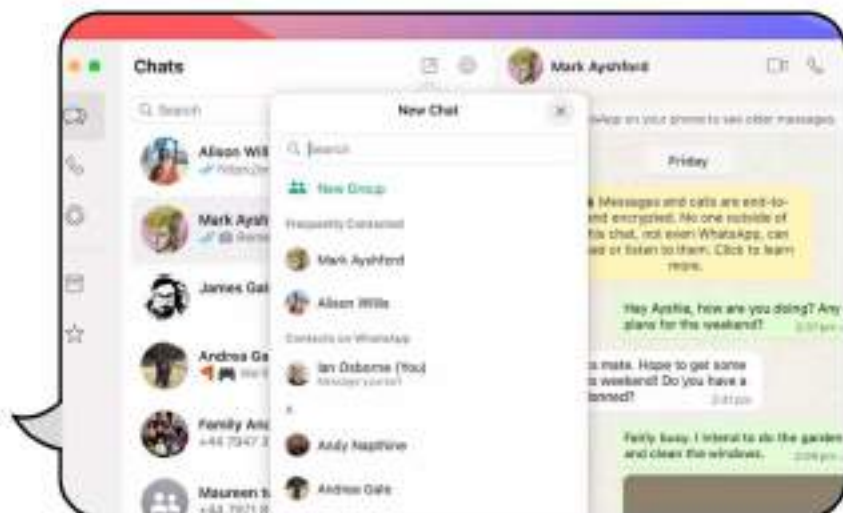
WhatsApp Desktop Options

The desktop version of WhatsApp offers a multitude of options for the user, although not as many as the main mobile version does. However, you can perform most of the usual tasks from within the comfort of your computer monitor.

1 Open WhatsApp Desktop and if you haven't already, sign in via the QR Code that the desktop displays. Once you've paired the mobile and the desktop, you can see the default desktop start screen, displaying the current chats, groups and your profile.



2 Click on the pen-and-paper icon for a menu that lets you start a new chat with one of your contacts, or start a new group chat. The circular icon with horizontal lines next to it toggles between showing all chats and only chats with unread messages.





3 Right-click on a chat in the list for a contextual menu, as shown. From here, you can mark the chat as unread, archive it, mute it (set how long with the sub-menu), pin it to the top of the chat window and more.



4 Right-click on an individual message or click on the down-pointing chevron that appears in its top-right corner when you hover over it for a menu that lets you react to it, report it, delete it, respond to that message in particular and more.



5 Click on the Settings icon, the cog in the bottom left corner of the window, for a whole range of settings options. Choose a category in the left-hand window and take a look at the options it offers on the right-hand side.



DESKTOP EMOJI

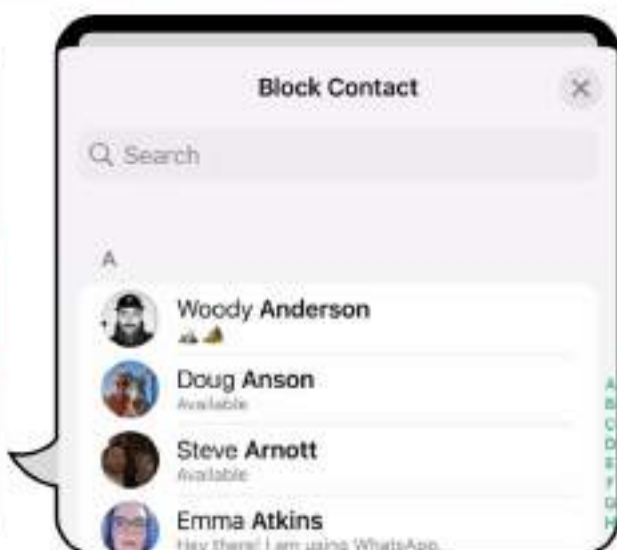
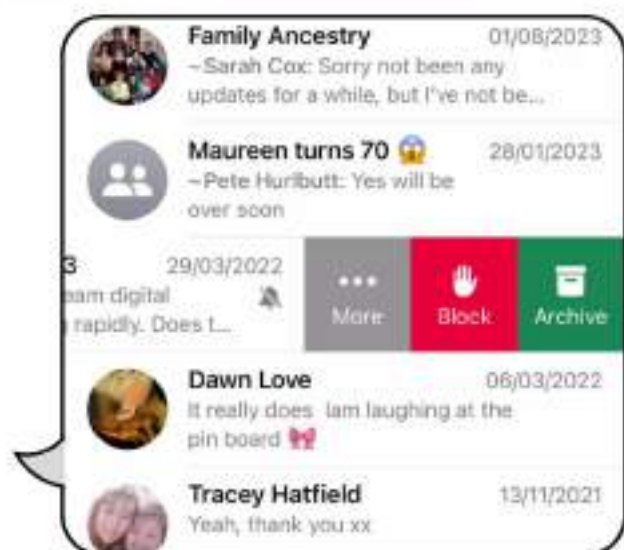
The desktop version of WhatsApp also gives you access to emojis, stickers and animated GIFs. In a chat simply click on the smiley face to the right of the text entry box for emojis, or the sticker icon next to it for stickers and GIFs, and you can choose to add them to your messages.





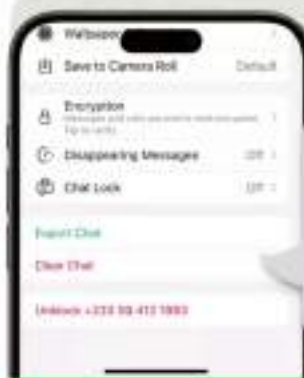
Block Contact

There may come a time when you need to block a contact from being able to message us. A contact that has become abusive or someone you don't know who has added you to a WhatsApp chat, needs to be silenced. Here's how to do it.



1 To block a person that's sent you a message, either deep-press on the chat in the chat list and select Block from the menu that appears. Alternatively, slide it to the left and tap the Block icon that appears.

2 Another way is to go to Settings > Privacy > Blocked and tap the Add New option at the top of the screen. You can then add a contact who's on WhatsApp regardless of whether they've already messaged you.



UNBLOCKING CONTACTS

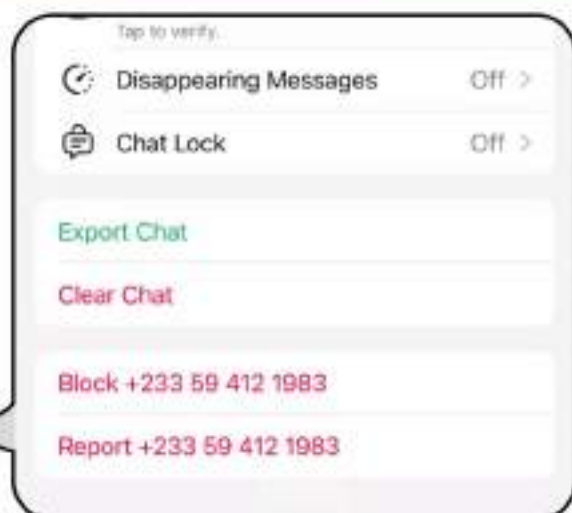
Unblocking a contact can be done via the Settings > Privacy > Blocked Contacts screen. Tap the contact you want to unblock, then at the foot of the information screen that appears, tap the Unblock 'contact name/number' option. The contact is now unblocked and you can receive messages, calls and status updates from them.



Report Spam



Spamming is a daily occurrence in the digital world. Some spammers cycle through numbers in the attempt to get hold of someone, usually with the aim of selling or hacking. Others specifically target someone once they get hold of their number.



1 Reporting a contact as Spam automatically blocks them as well. To report spam, open the chat and tap the person's name or number at the top of the screen. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and tap Report. The WhatsApp team review the report and take any necessary actions, such as banning the number.

2 It's a similar process on a WhatsApp desktop app. Click on the chat in question, and in the right-hand window, click on the person's name or number at the top. A menu appears, offering the same options as on the mobile apps. At the foot of this menu is the option to report the person in question.

SPAM AND HOAXES



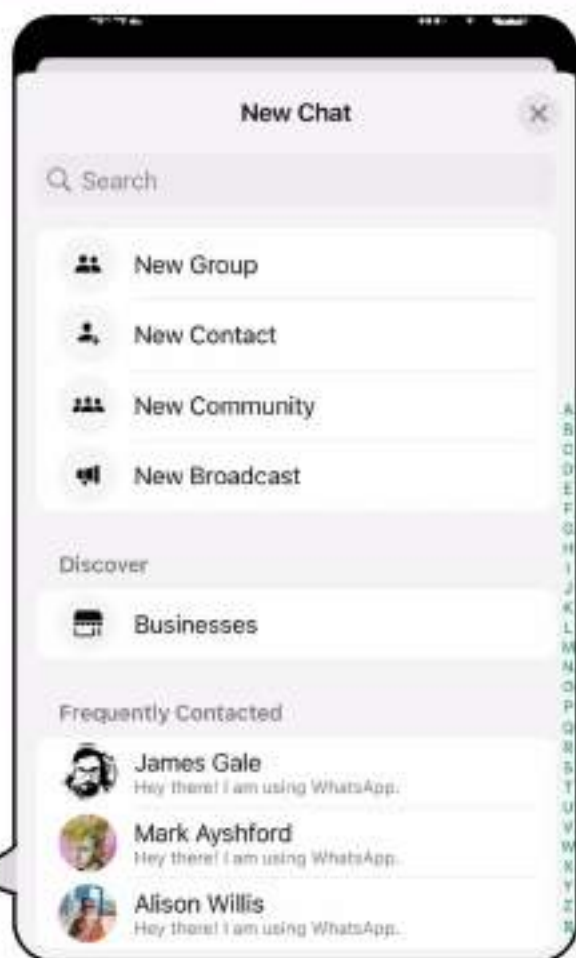
The Internet is full of spam and hoaxes and WhatsApp is no exception. While the company does an excellent job of blocking most cases of spam, inevitably some do get through. Spam and hoax messages spread false information and are generally designed to deceive you and coax you into acting a certain way. If a message looks suspicious then don't tap on it, share it or forward it. Report it immediately.



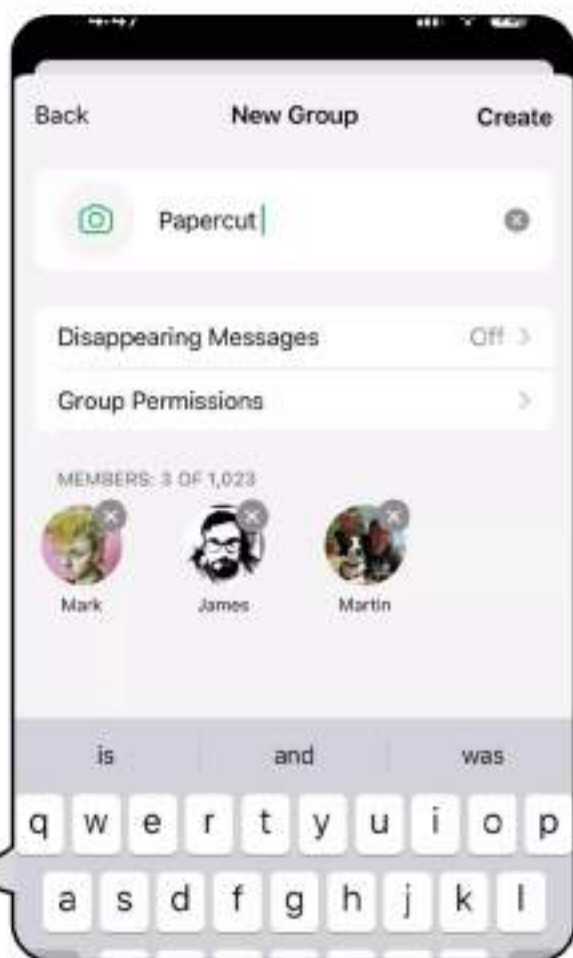
Creating a Group



Groups are a great way for multiple WhatsApp contacts to stay in touch, help each other out, arrange a day or night out or just have a laugh between friends when you can't all be together at the same time. Here's how to create one.



1 Open WhatsApp and from the green Plus icon choose the first option, New Group. Tap each contact to add them to the group and they appear as members at the top of the screen. Tapping 'X' next to their picture removes them.



2 When you've picked the members, tap the Next link in the top-right corner of the screen. The next screen requires you to name the group; enter a name up to 25 characters long and tap the smiley face to add any emoji to the name.



LEAVE OR DELETE THE GROUP

Cool Group

Created by You on 12/11/14

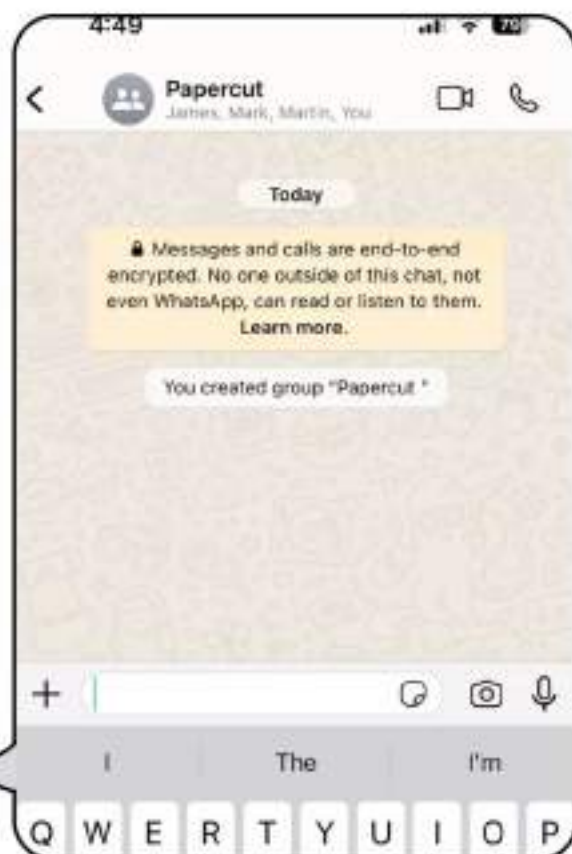
You're no longer a participant in this group.

0 participants

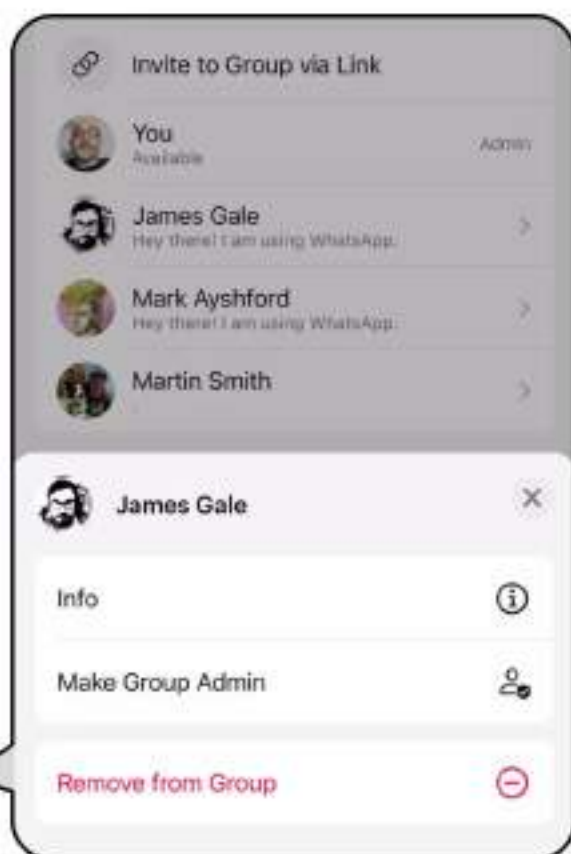
Delete group

Report spam

To exit a group, open the group chat and tap its name atop the screen. Scroll the information screen all the way to the bottom, and tap the Exit Group option. To delete the group, remove its members one by one and then leave it yourself. The group, which then has no members, is deleted.



3 Tap Create (top right) when ready and the Group is created with the selected members included. Any messages you enter are seen by the group members and likewise any messages they enter are seen by you and everyone else in the group.

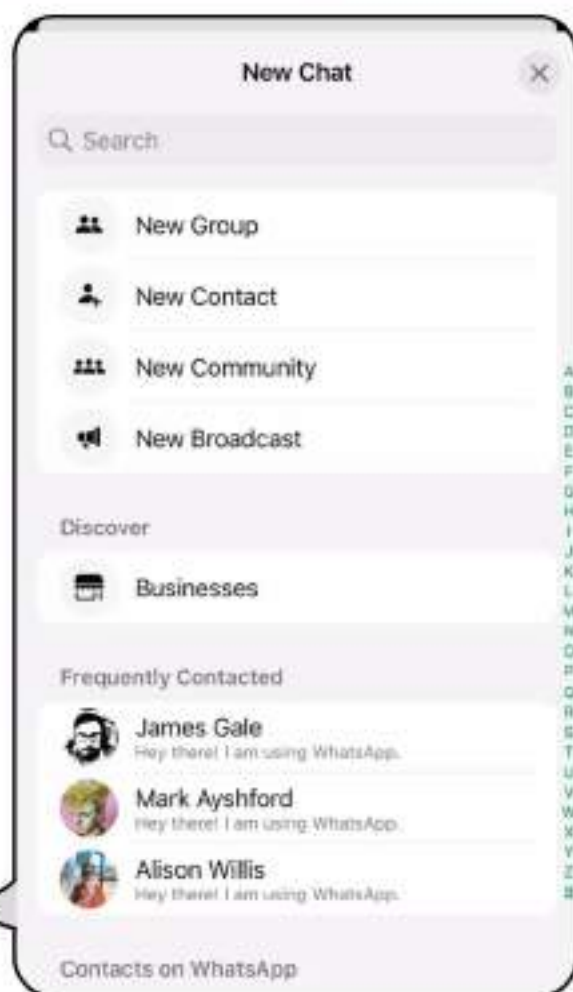


4 Open the group chat and tap its name at the top of the screen for information about the group. As well as the usual options, you can scroll up and tap on a group member, and then give them admin rights or remove them from the group.

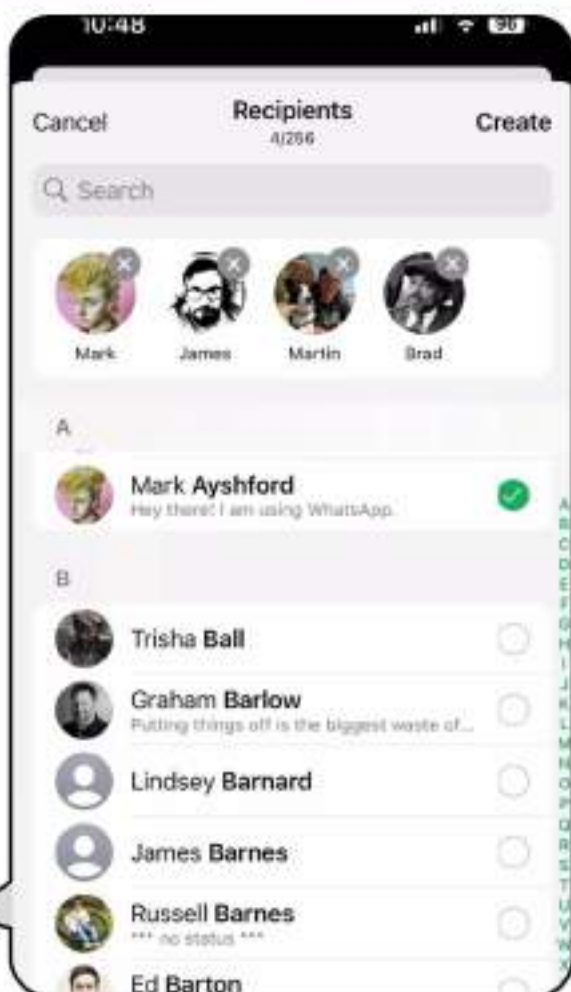


New Broadcast

The Broadcast feature in WhatsApp is very similar to that of a Group. However, a Broadcast differs in that each recipient in the Broadcast List is not able to see other contacts' replies. You're broadcasting out but they reply individually.



1 You can set up Broadcast Lists to message contacts you regularly want to send messages to, without wanting to add them to a Group. Start by tapping the green Plus icon, then choose New Broadcast from the menu.



2 Like when creating a Group, you need to select the recipients to whom you want to broadcast your messages. Tap each contact you want to include in the list and they are added to the top of the screen. Tap the 'X' next to their profile image to remove them.

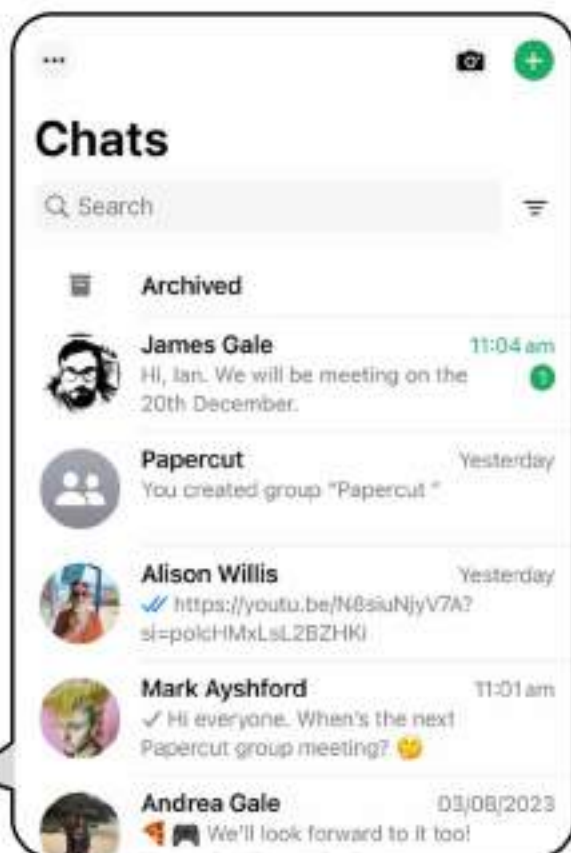


ADDING CONTACTS OR DELETING LISTS

You can easily add more contacts to your Broadcast List and even delete the list by tapping and holding on the Broadcast List until a tick appears, tapping the three vertical dots in the corner and selecting Broadcast List Info from the menu. The info screen allows you to add and remove recipients or contacts, as well as delete the list or report a list as spam.



3 Tap Create (top right) to finish and you are taken to a chat screen; as with normal and group chats, you can enter your message and include emoji, animated GIFs or attachments. Tap the green icon to send your message to the chosen contacts.



4 When you tap back to the main Chats screen replies sent to your Broadcast message appear as regular chats. They appear as messages from individuals, though. The Broadcast option sends a message to multiple recipients, but doesn't create a group.

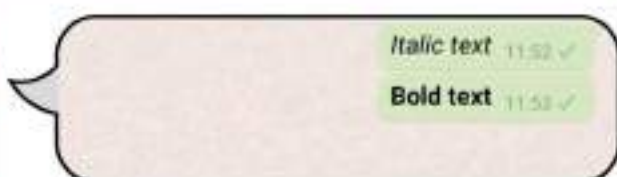


Formatting Text

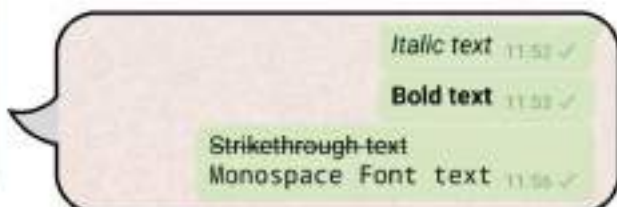
To add a little extra to your messages, WhatsApp introduced ways in which you can format your text. You can change the formatting of entire sentences or just snippets of text to italic, bold, strikethrough or as a Monospaced font.



1 Enter a chat and either select text you've already written or with new text, enter: ***_Text_***. This displays the text as Italics.



2 For Bold text, put an asterisk on either side of the text. Again, you can select sections of text you've already written or enter new text. For example: ****Text**** and tap the Send button.



3 Strikethrough and Monospace Font text styles can be achieved by placing a tilde on both sides of the text: ***-Strikethrough text-*** and for Monospace Font, use three backticks either side: ******Monospace Font text******.



ALTERNATIVE FORMATTING

Alternatively, instead of adding extras before and after the text, simply highlight the text in the text field, tap the Format option that appears and choose Bold, Italic, Strikethrough or Monospace.



Quote Messages



Quoting text is an important part of messaging, so it's natural that WhatsApp has enabled the feature by default. If you need to quote something a contact has said in a chat, then here's how to do it.



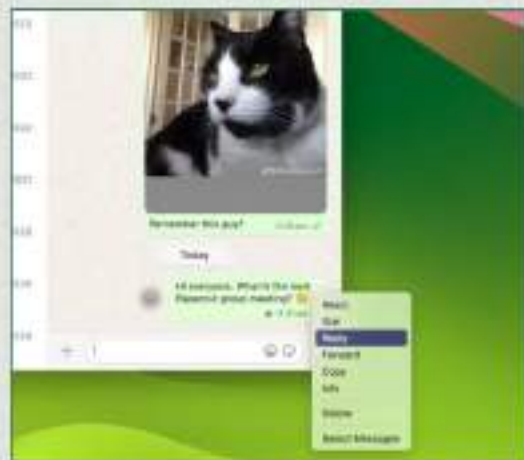
1 To quote text, first open a message and locate what it is you want to quote. Tap and press the text to highlight it and call up a set of icons at the top of the screen.



2 Tap the Reply option and the highlighted text is displayed within a box with a section at the bottom for you to enter your text. You can also include emoji, animated GIFs and attachments with the quote. When you're ready, tap the Send button to quote the text.

QUOTING WITH THE DESKTOP VERSION

If you want to quote some text via the desktop version of WhatsApp the process is a little different. First open the chat and find the message you want to quote. Hover the mouse pointer over it and a down-pointing chevron appears on the right of the message. Click the arrow, followed by Reply. You can now reply in the same way as the mobile version.





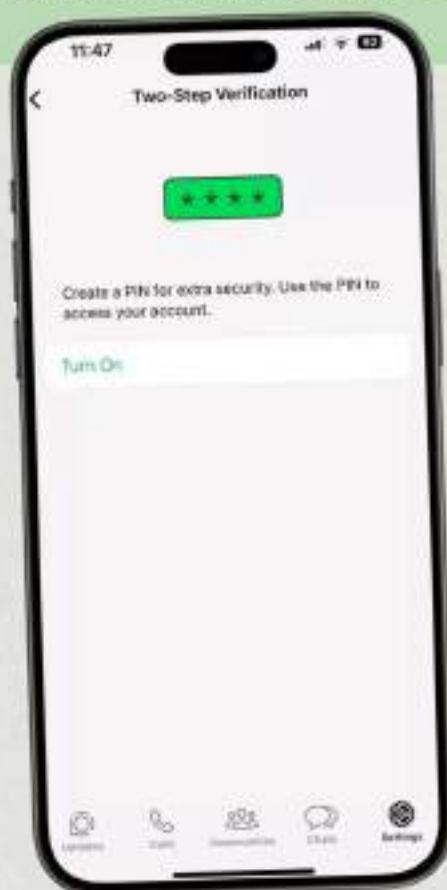
How to Secure Yourself on WhatsApp

With over a billion users worldwide, accounts of terrorists using WhatsApp, along with hackers, scammers and all manner of nefarious individuals and groups are always in the popular media. Here are ten tips to help make WhatsApp a safer social media platform.



1 Protecting your WhatsApp account can be done mainly through the Settings > Account option. In here you're able to secure your personal details, profile, status, messaging and visibility of your account.

2 Thankfully, WhatsApp already encrypts and secures messages sent from one device to another. This means that your data can't be intercepted and read. However, you can opt to view security notifications if a contact's security setting has been altered. This is in the Settings > Account > Security menu. chats.



3 For added security you can opt for two-step authentication, which requires a PIN when registering your phone number with WhatsApp. This is an absolute must for those who use the app regularly.



4 Beyond WhatsApp itself, make sure that your phone or tablet is securely locked with an access PIN, pattern, facial or finger print recognition system. This way, should you lose your phone, its locked against anyone who tries to access it and WhatsApp.

5 Generally you're not able to add users to your chat list if you don't already have them in your contacts list. However, clever phishing scams can have a victim add a contact, who can then message them using WhatsApp. Just as with all social media platforms, be wary of phishing attacks.

6 You can block users via the WhatsApp Web feature. Log into WhatsApp Web and click on the three horizontal dots by your profile picture. Then click Settings and from there click the Blocked option. You can select contacts to block from WhatsApp.

7 You can block all images from appearing on your photostream within WhatsApp. iOS users can look to their Settings then Privacy > Photos and deselect WhatsApp from the list of allowed apps. Android users need to create a file called .nomedia within the WhatsApp images folder to stop the app from listing pictures.

8 If you don't want WhatsApp contacts to see where you've been, you need to disable the Last Seen option within the Privacy settings. This prevents other users from 'seeing' your movements. Should a malicious contact be added, then they will never know where you are or have been.

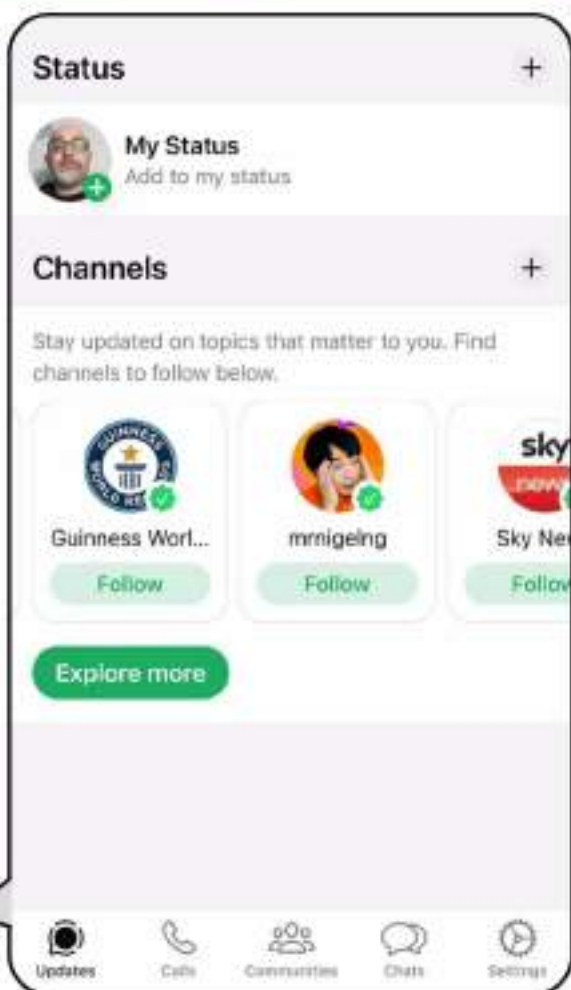
9 Be wary of scams where you're be contacted through other social media accounts informing you that your WhatsApp account has been compromised. These often request you to add a so-called legitimate contact, who in reality isn't, or visit a webpage that's riddled with malware.

10 If you use WhatsApp Web it's always best to ensure that you've logged out of it correctly before leaving your computer. The last thing you need is for someone to come over to your computer and view any conversations between contacts.

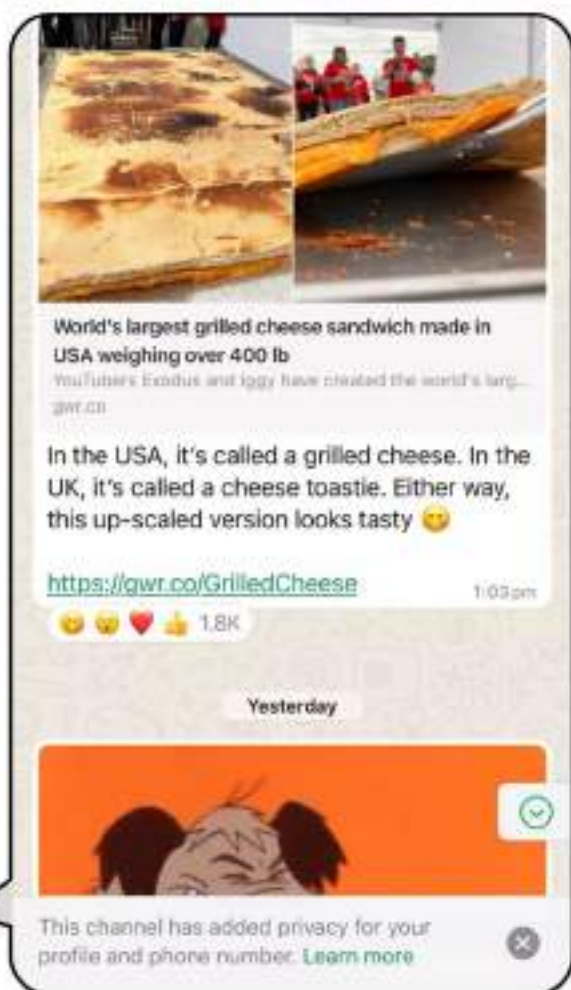


WhatsApp Channels

With Channels, you can receive updates and information from people and organisations, directly through WhatsApp. Messages received through Channels are separate from your chats, and are one-way only.



1 Open WhatsApp and tap Updates at the foot of the screen. You see a Channels option. Suggestions are offered; tap Follow under a channel to which you want to subscribe, and tap Explore More for a more comprehensive list of channels. Tap a channel's Plus symbol to subscribe to it.



2 Tap a channel (not its subscribe button) to see their recent posts. If there's a subject that interests you, type it into the Search field and see if there's a channel for it. If there is, subscribe. Then, whenever there's an update from the organisation in question, you receive it in WhatsApp.



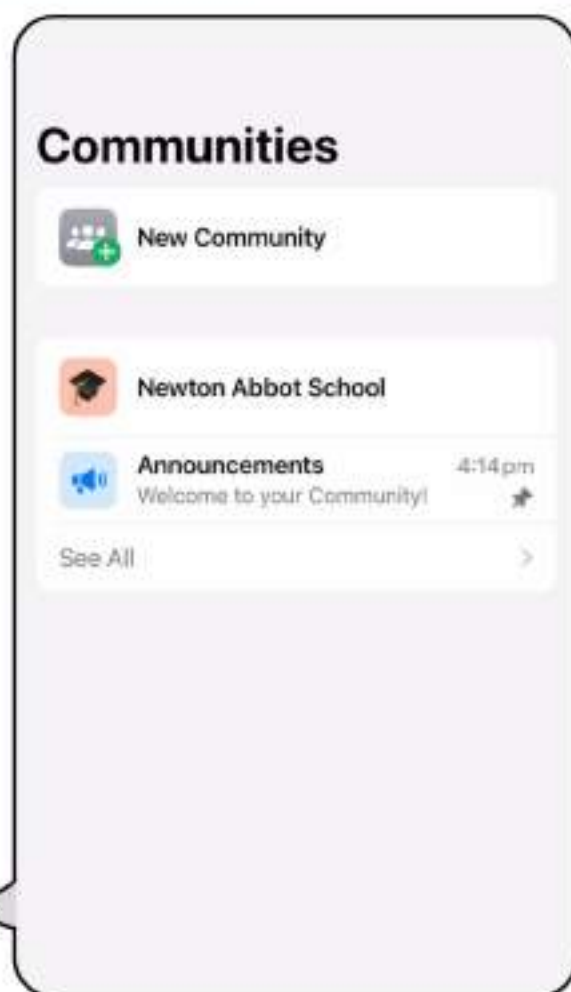
Joining Communities



With WhatsApp Communities, you can connect multiple related groups together in one place. When in a community, you can switch between groups to find the information you need. Here's how to use them on your smartphone.



1 Open WhatsApp, and at the foot of the screen, tap the Communities icon. To start a new community, tap the button and then type a name and a short description of the community. You can take or choose a photograph for it too.



2 You can then add groups to the community. Tap the name of the community and then tap the three dots icon and open Community Settings, where you can set who can add members and groups. By default it's everyone.



Text Language Glossary

RU SITD or gr8 @ texting? If you don't know what any of that means, then here's a handy glossary to help you decipher some of the more popularly used text language and what the abbreviations and Net lingo mean.

2moro

Tomorrow

2nte

Tonight

AEAP

As Early as Possible

ALAP

As Late as Possible

ASAP

As Soon as Possible

ASL

Age / Sex / Location?

B3

Blah, Blah, Blah

B4YKI

Before You Know it

BFF

Best Friends, Forever

BM&Y

Between Me and You

BRB

Be right Back

BRT

Be right There

BTAM

Be that as it May

C-P

Sleepy

CTN

Cannot talk now

CUS

See You Soon

CWOT

Complete Waste of Time

CYT

See You Tomorrow

E123

Easy as 1, 2, 3

EM?

Excuse Me?

EOD

End of Day

F2F

Face to Face

FC

Fingers Crossed

FOAF

Friend of a Friend

GR8

Great

HAK

Hugs and Kisses

IDC

I Don't Care

IDK

I Don't Know

ILU / ILY

I Love You

IMU

I Miss You

IRL

In Real Life

J/K

Just Kidding

JC

Just Checking

JTLYK

Just to Let You Know

KFY

Kiss for You

KMN

Kill Me Now

KPC

Keeping Parents Clueless

L8R

Later

LOL

Laugh Out Loud

MoF

Male or Female

MTFBWY

May the Force be with You

MYOB

Mind Your Own Business

N-A-Y-L

In a While

NAZ

Name, Address, ZIP

NC

No Comment

NIMBY

Not in my Backyard

NM

Never Mind / Nothing Much



NP No Problem	PAW Parents are Watching	SMIM Send Me an Instant Message
NSFW Not Safe for Work	PIR Parent in Room	SO Significant Other
NTIM Not that it Matters	POS Parent over Shoulder	TMI Too Much Information
NVM Never Mind	PROP(S) Proper Respect / Proper Recognition	UR Your/You Are
OATUS On a totally Unrelated Subject	QT Cutie	W8 Wait
OIC Oh, I See	RN Right Now	WB Welcome Back
OMW On My Way	RU Are You	WYCM Will You Call Me?
OTL Out to Lunch	SEP Someone else's Problem	WYWH Wish You Were Here
OTP On the Phone	SITD Still in the Dark	XOXOXOX Hugs, Kisses, ...
P911 Parent Alert	SLAP Sounds like a Plan	YMMD You made my Day
PAL Parents are Listening		





WhatsApp Security for Guardians

WhatsApp isn't a stranger when it comes to negative press. From teenage cyberbullying to scams to rob a user of their money and data, there's more than enough to make you want to unplug and hide in a cave.

In this chapter, we look at how you, as a guardian and a young person, can make WhatsApp a safer place without compromising the app's features. We look at encryption, cyberbullying, social engineering and more.

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WhatsApp Issues



While WhatsApp is the world's most popular third-party chat app, it's not without its fair share of problems. Although some stem from the engineering and governing of the app, others come from a different source.

Being the world's most popular chat app can't be easy. The developers issue an update and succeed in making one half of the WhatsApp population happy, while the other half take to other social media platforms to vehemently voice their disgust. You manage to swat one identified scam, and another two come along to take its place. You increase safety and privacy, and it annoys the users with the additional layers of security. It would seem that as a WhatsApp developer you're facing a never-ending battle of compromises.

As a parent or guardian, though,

WhatsApp has introduced a new entry point into your child's web of protection that you have so carefully weaved since the day they were born. It's this potential chink in the barrier that causes some of the most documented issues with regards to WhatsApp.

Protecting young adults, remember you need to be 16 to legally use WhatsApp, is at the forefront of the modern-day Internet,

and its varying platforms that connect everything. Chat rooms, and platforms that enable chatting to others, have been around since the beginning of interconnected computers, and they've all inherently had to deal with the same issues: other users.

Most WhatsApp chats are friendly exchanges between those who know each other, in groups or individually. However, there's always a sinister aspect lurking in the background waiting for an opportunity to invade a chat. Back in the day, before mobile devices, chat rooms employed an admin to carefully monitor the public chat. Should someone appear and start to steer the chat population toward a topic that breached the rules of the chatroom, then the admin had the ability to stop the wayward stream of words and either issue a warning, or completely ban the individuals from the room altogether.

This admin level user regulated the conversations, and it mostly kept scams and forms of social engineering to a minimum. Users could participate in private chats, but if they felt uncomfortable at any point, they could easily invite the admin and let them see what was going on. It worked, to a degree.

WhatsApp doesn't have an admin user, or a parental figure looking over the chat stream, to quickly put a stop to anything untoward. In many respects, this level of freedom from an overarching big brother is a good thing, but it does mean that the aforementioned sinister element often has free reign over its victims, sometimes to devastating effect.



Scams are rife throughout the Internet



THE MOMO EFFECT

Let's take a look at one such disturbing WhatsApp issue that ended in the deaths of a number of young people.

The Momo Challenge, or Momo Suicide Challenge, is believed to have originated in South America. A creepy image of a face was displayed on the screen, or a video, with the words: "Hi, I'm Momo. I want to play with you. Look for a knife in your kitchen and cut your little hands. If you don't, Momo will come after you..."; or words to that effect.

Sadly, it was reported that some youngsters did hurt themselves as a result of this message. Other copycat messages soon

started appearing; requesting the reader kill themselves or 'something' will come for their family.

Needless to say, local police, children safety organisations, and other such charities issued letters, posters, and advice to help guardians, teachers, parents, and carers deal with WhatsApp and Internet safety. Unfortunately, this opened the door for other similar trends to appear baiting people into committing harmful acts, or handing over money or information.

It's patently clear WhatsApp has its issues, but when used safely it can be a fantastic tool to stay in contact.





Steps to Help Protect Users



You can't always monitor a young person's online activity, especially when using WhatsApp, but there are steps you can take to help them become chat-smart and avoid unpleasant messages or scams.

FOR GUARDIANS

Those of you who are in charge of a young person, here's some tips to help keep them safe in an ever-changing digital world.

Talk - Probably the most important piece of advice anyone can give: Talk. Have regular conversations about what's happening online. Talk about the latest scams, talk about what should and shouldn't be shared online or in WhatsApp. Encourage them to be able to talk to you about anything online.



Research - Do your research! In conjunction with the first piece of advice, read about the latest scams coming through WhatsApp and online, so you can talk to a young person. Use sites such as Net Aware (<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/#>) to keep up-to-date with the latest digital safety news.



FOR KIDS

You may well know more about WhatsApp and the Internet than the previous generation, but here are a couple of pointers to stick to.

Stop - Say no!
Be assertive, and confident. If you're being asked to do or say something that makes you feel uncomfortable, then say no. Leave the chat, group, or whatever. Speak to your parent or guardian about it and show them the conversation.



Ask for Help - Talk to someone. It's important for the parents and guardians to talk to you, but you also need to learn to talk to them, or someone in a position of care, about how you're feeling. If you feel you're being a victim of a scam, then reach out to a parent, teacher, the NSPCC, or even the police.

NSPCC



Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) is a UK-based charity founded in 1884. It helps connect children and young people to adults trained to deal with stressful situations, or victims of abuse. Since the rise of the Internet, the charity has adopted an increased online role, and is considered one of the best sources of safety advice and help today.



Cyberbullying



Of the many threats prevalent online to children and young people, cyberbullying is perhaps one of the most common. Bullying is, sadly, a fact of life. There will always be the bully, who preys on those they perceive as weaker, different, or purely out of spite. Now, however, they have the ability to bully from the Internet.

ONLINE BULLYING

Cyberbullying is when someone uses the Internet, email, online gaming, social media, and any other kind of digital platform to threaten, tease, humiliate, or upset someone else. Both the bully and the victim of the bullying can be any age, from very young children up to late teens and beyond, in some cases. And the source of the bullying could be someone the victim knows, at school or college, or a complete stranger on the other side of the world.

Bullying someone online doesn't always involve threatening remarks. What may seem like a playful comment on one side could be taken as a cutting jibe on the other. It's not always an easy thing to specify, as we all have moments when we may say or do something to upset someone without meaning to do that person any emotional harm. Usually though, we are quick to apologise for our mistake once we realise that we've upset the other person with our thoughtless use of a loose and throwaway comment.

True cyberbullying, however, is the persistent harassment of an individual. The cyberbully will goad, threaten, send nasty messages, even take images of the victim and Photoshop them in inappropriate situations, through the use of many different forms of online communications. It's a sad fact too, that a lot of young people

are already in a heightened emotional state over their body image, thanks to the media and unrealistic Photoshopping of celebrities. Where young people, especially young teens, are very conscious of their image, a slight remark to someone can impact the young person in an incredibly negative way.



Social Media – Probably one of the main platforms for cyberbullying, social media is an ideal hunting ground for the cyberbully. The effects of social media bullying have been devastating on some families. Teen suicides, self harm, and elevated cases of depression among young people are widespread in the media, and bring to light just how powerful and dangerous social media is as a communications tool.



Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other examples have all become the haunt of those who will prey and harass on others. From the point of view of a child, whose emotional state is quite vulnerable, even a simple 'like' of a comment can embarrass or hurt.



Online Gaming - Another prime source of modern cyberbullying; online gaming has proved to be, for some, a vicious place to inhabit. The problem with online gaming, of course, is that the bullying comes from anywhere in the world. There are cases of gamers targeting females, different religions, or those who come from different parts of the world. With the use of headsets, the gaming cyberbullies are able to shout threats and taunt other gamers, rallying others around them until the victims feel overwhelmed by bullies.

There are numerous games that have adopted a more sport-friendly approach, introducing policies whereby instances of bullying can be reported and the bullies themselves have their gaming accounts suspended. Often online gaming bullying is just someone shouting 'Noob' at another, degrading the victim as a newcomer, or someone who isn't as good as them. Other times the bully will say things like 'I hope you die', or, 'I'm coming to kill you', or something similar. In short, any abusive behaviour, including destroying your online game creations or belongings, is a form of bullying.



Text Messaging - With more and more young people having access to their own phones or tablets, abusive text messaging is becoming a major issue. WhatsApp isn't alone in this, but as the world's most popular chat app, it's often focused on more.

Another aspect of cyberbullying via text message is sexting. This is when someone takes an explicit image, or video, of themselves and sends it to someone else. Sometimes, a person can bully someone into sending them images, or videos, of the victim, then send those images on to others or upload them to popular sites and inform an entire group of their location.

Email - Sending abusive emails is a large area of concern for those involved in protecting young people from cyberbullying. As we've seen, the double-edged blade of anonymity can cut both ways: it'll protect your identity online, but it can also hide an individual who is bullying someone. Anonymous emails sent from a bully can be just as harmful as social media, online gaming and texting. It's a more personal form of bullying, much like having an abusive letter addressed and posted directly to you.

Cyberbullying covers many different forms and platforms. It can be a single, throwaway comment, a like on a Facebook comment, or just someone calling someone else a 'noob'; it can be very serious indeed, including death threats, threats of violence, or the sending or posting of explicit images or videos.



Social Engineering



With the rise of wider forms of communication, through social media and so on, comes a new wave of threats called social engineering. There are many forms of social engineering, let's have a look at what you're up against, and how to combat it.

MANIPULATION AND COERCION

You may think you're not the sort of person to be fooled by a scam, but often the scammers have employed subtle ways and means to entrap you.

Social engineering is the modern way of manipulating people to give up their personal and confidential information. It comes in many guises and under different sub-headings, such as Phishing, but it's basically all a form of

social engineering. Essentially, the scammer will employ your human nature and responses and turn it against you for their own gain.

The kind of information the scammer is after does vary, depending on the type of scam being used, but for the most part they're usually after your passwords, bank and credit card details, or login information in order to gain any sort of financial data.

DON'T BECOME A VICTIM

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Social engineering is the modern way of manipulating people to give up their personal and confidential information. It comes in many guises and under different sub-headings, such as Phishing and the like, but it's basically all a form of social engineering. Essentially, the scammer will employ your human nature and responses and turn it against you for their own gain.

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1 Slow Down: Many scammers want you to react quickly, as a matter of urgency. Take a moment to figure out what's going on, and don't fall for any high-pressure tactics. Ask for half-an-hour to call a friend for advice.

2 Never give out any password information: A bank will never ask you for your password, they'll never call you up, or send a text message requesting to enter your password, nor will they ask you for other personal information relating to your account. Treat all requests as suspect and don't give out any of your passwords.

3 Don't engage: While it's fun to taunt a scammer on the other end of the telephone, telling them that the only computer you own is a Commodore 64, it's really not worth it. They know they're scamming, you know they're scamming, so just put the phone down and ignore them.

4 Research everything: Locate your bank or credit card company's webpage and follow any links to known social engineering scams. Read all the information you can gather about the techniques and tricks used and arm yourself with that knowledge prior to any contact from a scammer. The more you know, the less likely you'll be hoodwinked.

5 Beware of attachments: Email attachments are an excellent way of distributing malware, viruses, and hacking scripts to your computer. If you receive an email claiming to be offering you a deal of a lifetime and requesting you simply open the attached file, then it's almost certainly a virus. Research the sender and the best advice is to delete the email.





Staying Safe on WhatsApp



There's more to staying safe on WhatsApp than simply being aware of the latest scams, hoaxes and viral messaging; you need to handle a situation when it arises, and you need to ensure you're as chat-smart as possible.

BE SMART

We've put together some tips to help you train your mind into being able to handle some common chat and WhatsApp situations.



1 Screenshots can be your backup.

If you find yourself in a conversation that's turned, or is turning, into something unpleasant, then make sure you screenshot every aspect of the conversation. Therefore, if you're called on to prove what happened later, then you've got the evidence behind you.



2 Accept people's points of view.

Not everyone has the same viewpoint on society, modern living, or life in general, as you do. Sometimes what seems natural to them may offend you, and vice versa. Learn to give a little, not too much, but enough so that you're not constantly offended. Obviously, report any true offensive behaviour, but allow other opinions.





GET A LIFE!

Chatting on WhatsApp with your friends is great, but it can be a strain sometimes. It's important to learn to unplug once in a while. Turn off your device, log out of your computer and pick up a book, or watch a film. Go out for a walk or a run, hit the gym, whatever it takes to have some time out from being online. You'll notice the difference in you, and you'll be better able to handle the negative aspects of online life.



3 Get some positivity. It may seem like something of a 'hippy' approach, but it's been proven that positive thinking can have a wonderful effect on a person. If you've been at the sharp end of a toxic conversation, find something that makes you feel better and positive about everything. Spread it around and you can help others too.

4 Avoid spoilers! One of the biggest bugbears of modern chat, and one element that causes no end of problems and arguments, is spoilers. A spoiler, if you're unaware, is when you mention too much and spoil the plot in a film, TV show, book, or game. If you know how Game of Thrones ends, for example, don't spoil it for others who still haven't got there yet.



Watch Out for Scams



WhatsApp, like most of the Internet, has its fair share of scams. Some are quite clever and devious, others are blatant and very obvious. All, though, are designed to part you with your money or obtain information. Either way, you need to watch out for them.

SCAM, SCAM, AND MORE SCAM!

Here are some of the most common WhatsApp scams that currently, and more often repeatedly, plague the service.



Codename: Olivia – We have recently seen a scam called Olivia, where the scammer used the name Olivia and then pretended to

be a friend, or a friend of a friend, in order to send links to pornographic material.

Verification Links – Scammers have found a way to send anonymous verification messages that contain links to sites, and downloads, which infect your device with malware. The verification messages look similar to those that you receive when you first sign up to WhatsApp, but in fact, they fool you into using them to get a malware payload.





SHOPPING VOUCHERS

One of the most common, and frequently used scams offers the chance to get hold of free shopping vouchers, worth hundreds, for high-street retailers. It's all about stealing data, as the scam voucher links directly to an online survey page that's designed to take your data and sell it. You're then asked to forward the voucher offer, thus creating more victims.



Free Stuff - A recent scam claims to be offering free Adidas trainers, worth hundreds, in celebration of the company's anniversary. Similar scams include offering free watches, phones, computers, software, and even courses that lead to high paying jobs... the list goes on. Naturally, there are no freebies, instead you're asked to pay \$1 to sign up for the chance. Times that by a million, and this becomes a lucrative scam.



Change Number Request - Another recent scam involves an anonymous message claiming that WhatsApp will be transferred to a new phone number. This change, you're told, is set to occur in 24 hours and you're given a number to call in order to stop the process. Don't call the number, it's a scam, and it will cost you dearly.



Phone Home...



A holiday abroad is a wonderful thing. You can relax by the pool, soak up the scenery and sample the local cuisine, but what about those times when you need to talk to home? WhatsApp can help.



1 WhatsApp is encrypted and secure, so it's ideal to have on your device when on holiday, especially as texting may not be an option, but before you contact home when you're abroad, or just out and about in your own country, it's worth knowing that data charges can quickly mount up.

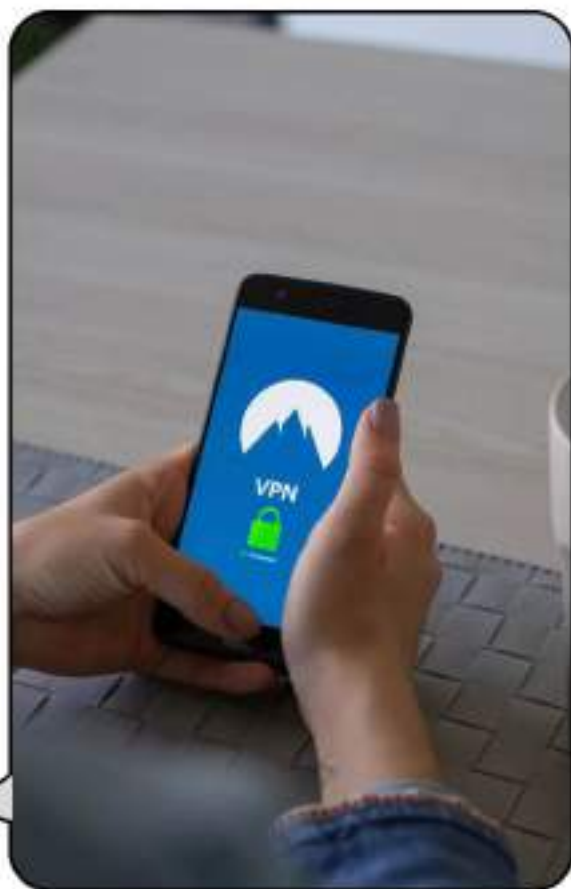


2 Always make sure you're connected to a local Wi-Fi hotspot when you use WhatsApp. Hotspots aren't always secure (we'll get to that in a second), but they're free, so they won't burn up your valuable monthly data allowance. For added digital safety read the privacy and security sections in this book.



CyberGhost VPN

One of the best VPN packages available is CyberGhost (<https://www.cyberghostvpn.com>). It costs very little to sign up for, and is available for Android, iOS, Windows, macOS, Linux, Chrome, Firefox and more. With 256-bit encryption, your data is safe and your device secure when using CyberGhost.



3 When using a free Wi-Fi hotspot, ensure that you're connected to a VPN. Using a VPN will further encrypt your communications between the hotspot and the Internet, stopping man-in-the-middle interception attacks. Sign up to a good VPN before leaving for your hols.



4 Use additional security on your device, such as a fingerprint Lock Screen. Enable all the relevant security features of WhatsApp, and make sure your phone/device is always within sight and reach. Then in the worst-case scenario of losing your device, all your data and WhatsApp history won't be leaked online.



What is a VPN?



While your system may be secure to any online threats, it doesn't always mean your privacy is assured. This is where a VPN comes in, as it offers the user a heightened level of anonymity while online and even another level of security and protection.

VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK

Using a VPN can help hide your online presence. While this may seem like an ideal way to get to illegal content, it's actually designed to help fight for your basic right to Internet and digital privacy.

A VPN (Virtual Private Network) is, essentially, a server or group of servers in a remote location with which you'll connect through a client. The VPN servers will then hide your Internet-bound IP address with their own, so for example, if you're connected to a VPN that's located in Australia then

your IP address would appear as if you were actually sat at a desktop Down Under.

The benefits of this are many, but mainly a VPN will allow you to access region restricted websites, protect you from tracking, and shield your browsing activities from those who want to find out where you are personally based. Obviously there comes a negative side, in the form of being able to access content that your country has deemed illegal for some reason. But on the positive, VPNs have allowed people



Using a VPN will protect your access online, and filter all your Internet traffic through its secure service



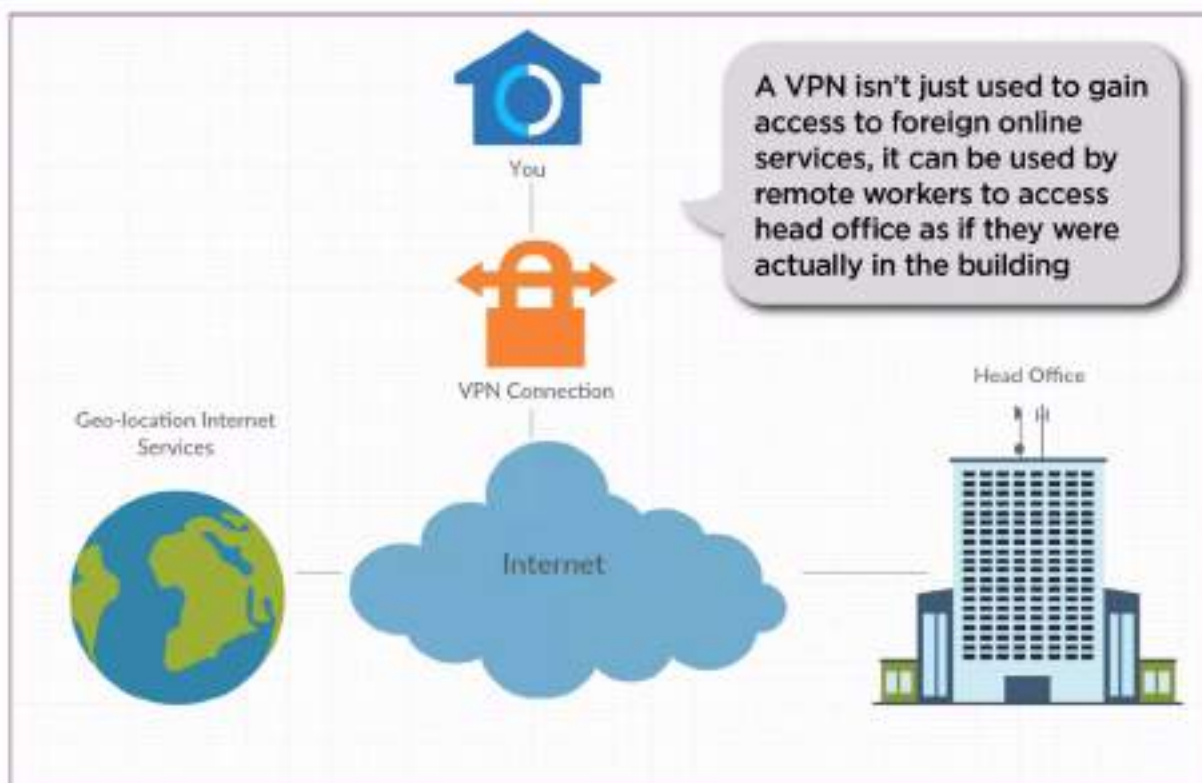
in countries with extraordinarily tight restrictions to get access to the outside world; often enabling them to report to the world what's going on in their own country.

For most users with a VPN, however, they're able to gain access to TV channels in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and other parts of the world. But it's not always about being able to moderately 'cheat the system' by forcing the Internet to think you're somewhere other than where you actually are; remote workers and employees, who live in other countries, can connect to company VPNs and use the company's network resources as if they were physically sat in the building.

The connection from your computer to the VPN server, via the client, is usually secure to the tune of 256-bit encryption levels, depending on the VPN company which hosts the service. All your Internet traffic will filter through the VPN server's systems, offering multiple layers of protection from viruses, malware and, naturally, privacy.

Beyond the other possible scenarios, using a VPN while you're abroad, working in a hotel for example, will enable you to access your home country's services and work resources. One more element that's worth mentioning: using Wi-Fi hotspots is one of the biggest security risk for travellers, and using a VPN can effectively improve your security while using a café's free Wi-Fi.

Mobile operating systems do allow connection to a VPN through the OS Settings, however, the more common, and in some respects, easier method, is to use the client which most VPNs now offer as standard. The client is often simply a connection window that will ask you your login details, then provide you with a method for connecting to any of provider's geo-location servers – listed by country. Once the choice is made, simply click the Connect box and within a few seconds, your IP address will be located within the chosen country.





Forms of encryption can be traced as far back as ancient Egypt, using non-standard hieroglyphs

nonrepudiation, where the sender cannot deny having sent the communication in the first place.

During the early digital age, the only users of encryption were the government and military, and between them, they created a set of algorithms and standards to protect the communication on the battlefield, and from one government agency to the next. As technology advanced, these algorithms grew in complexity and it wasn't long before the military-based forms of encryption were being used in commercial modes of communications. Within a few short years, bank transfers, cash withdrawals, and data sent to and from modems, began utilising these new protocols to protect sensitive information.

Today, we're regularly seeing and using devices that boast 'military grade 256-bit AES' forms of encryption, a standard that is regarded as near-impossible to break without spending billions on specialist hardware and software. In plain English, the modern form of encryption takes data and passes it through an algorithm together with a key. This creates a garbled file of characters that can only be clearly read if the correct key is applied to decrypt the data. Algorithms today are divided into two categories: symmetric and asymmetric.

Symmetric key ciphers use the same key to both encrypt and decrypt data. The most popular symmetric cipher is AES (Advanced Encryption Standard), developed by the military and governments to protect communications and data. This is a fast form of decryption that requires the sender to exchange the key used to encrypt the data

with the recipient before they're able to read the contents.

Asymmetric key ciphers are also known as public-key cryptography and utilise two mathematically linked keys: public and private. The public key can be shared with everyone and is usually generated by software, or provided by a designated authority. The private key is something that's usually only known by the individual user. Interestingly, both types of keys can be applied in situations where one user has a public key and another a private key, which combine to form a shared encryption level.

These keys are many characters in length, making it nigh impossible for someone to Brute Force hack them. The Brute Force method involves using a program on a computer to try every possible combination of a key until the correct one is found. In the case of the 256-bit encryption, it would take 2^{256} different combinations to break the key. If you were able to force one trillion keys per second, it would still take you somewhere in the region of 10^{57} years in order to crack 256-bit encryption. However, a powerful computer can probably manage around two billion calculations per second, so in theory it would take 9.2^{50} years for your standard desktop to crack it. Bear in mind that the universe has theoretically only been in existence for 1.4^{10} years.

Numbers as big as that are generally far too mind-boggling to comprehend, suffice to say that if you're able to use 256-bit encryption for your communications, or to protect your data, then you're going to be protected for at least seven times the current age of the universe.



How Can a VPN Further Secure WhatsApp?



Using a VPN is a great way to secure your device and increase your privacy when online. Nevertheless, can using a VPN further increase your security when using WhatsApp? Let's have a look and see how beneficial a VPN can be.

A VPN, as we've discussed already, enables you to connect to a remote server, which gives your computer, or device, an alternative IP address and encases all your communications to and from the device, and the Internet, inside a highly encrypted bubble of protection. It's a fantastic service and if you haven't already, you should really consider adopting it.

WhatsApp offers a high level of encryption between you and other users, meaning that without the right encryption keys, someone won't be able to intercept a WhatsApp message and read its contents. However, there have been some security issues brought to light in recent years involving WhatsApp.

One of the main issues, that has since been patched, was that the encryption keys could be intercepted when WhatsApp made a connection to an offline user. The message would then wait until the user was back online before issuing a new encryption key. It was possible for a clever hacker to 'read' the encryption key and thus gain access to the communications between the users.

While it was a security flaw, and one the media clung to like a vampire bat, it was something that for several reasons wouldn't normally happen to the average user. For one, the hacker would need to be very, very good in order to be able to 'read' the encryption key, and they would have had to





Encryption is great, but if your device isn't secure it's next to useless

create an entire fake network in order to fool the WhatsApp client. Another, WhatsApp, as soon as it was made aware of the flaw, quickly pushed out an update to all devices, and all versions; so unless you had not updated your device, and were also unlucky enough to be the target for a secret agent level hacker, then you were reasonably safe.

A more recent discovery by an Israeli security company, confirmed that it was possible to get access to a device's operating system and, in turn, get access to the WhatsApp client and messages - rendering the WhatsApp end-to-end encryption model pointless. The vulnerability was created using spyware called Pegasus, and allowed a remote user to access the device's camera, microphone, desktop, apps and back-end OS specifics. What's more, according to security experts, the spyware can be transmitted to a device simply by calling it.

GO VPN

Naturally, this causes all manner of security issues. While the WhatsApp client is secure, the operating system it sits on isn't. This is where a VPN comes in handy.

When you connect to a VPN service, your entire data stream, all the packets leaving and entering your device, are encrypted. That means anything that tries to intercept

them will end up reading through pages of encrypted garbage instead of pure text logs of your device.

A common method of device hacking employed is a man-in-the-middle attack, where someone has created a fake Wi-Fi point, piggybacked off a real Wi-Fi hotspot. An unsuspecting user will connect to the Wi-Fi hotspot, believing it to be the one belonging to the café, for example, but in actual fact, they've connected to the hacker's device. The hacker can then filter all data from a device through their various tools of the trade, before allowing it to exit via the real Wi-Fi hotspot. The user doesn't suspect a thing, but the hacker now has clear access to any data sent and received, and can read it at their leisure. Using a VPN will encrypt your data, even if it has spyware installed, and make it impossible for the hacker to be able to read the information sent to and from your device.

GET A GOOD AV

Further advice, beyond using a VPN, is to ensure that your device is up-to-date. Frequently check the OS updates as well as all the installed apps. Also, look into getting a good Anti-Virus or Anti-Malware client for your device. It may cause it to slow slightly, but it's better than being hacked.



A VPN encrypts data to and from your device



Factoid: The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

WhatsApp is a powerful tool. It can be a force for good, it can be used by scammers, and it can be used to hurt and abuse. It's a multifaceted app and it needs to be used responsibly.





The Good - WhatsApp has regularly been used to help journalists, and those in conflict nations around the world, spread the news of what's actually happening within a country where access to the Internet and the outside world is near impossible.



The Bad - WhatsApp is fast becoming one of the main platforms for spreading malware, viruses, and scamming users. Scams include fake offers, fake users, and data theft.



The Ugly - WhatsApp has been used in cases of cyberbullying, some of which have resulted in young people self-harming and even in some circumstances, committing suicide.



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